Challenges of education sector

328. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is facing problems in meeting the challenges of the education sector on its own;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto and the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken for enhancing competitiveness of the Indian education system in the global market;

(c) whether Government has strategically decided to adopt public private participation route in education sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the policy made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Public investment on all sectors of education is sought to be inreased several fold during the Eleventh Five Year Plan for enhancing capacity and improving quality thereof.

(c) and (d) There is already private not-for-profit participation in all sectors of education. The Eleventh Plan envisages the setting up of several new institutions mainly in the public sector, while also exploring possibilities of private participation in some of them.

Teacher student ratio in IIMs

329. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the existing Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) in the country are struggling hard to meet their teacher student ratio; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Kolkata and Kozhikode are reportedly facing some problems in recruiting faculty in adequate numbers, but not the IIMs at Lucknow and Indore.

(b) Supply constraints in respect of Ph.D qualified candidates coming out of reputed Institutions and willing to serve as faculty in IIMs.

Winding up of AICTE

330. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Knowledge Commission has recommended the winding up of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE);

(b) if so, what are the specific recommendations in this regard and the reasons given by the Commission for the same; and

(c) what are the reactions of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Relevant extracts from the "Compilation of recommendations on Education" published by the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) in November, 2007 are enclosed as Statement (*See* below).

(c) No decision has so far been taken by the Government on the above recommendations.

Statement

Extracts from the "Compilation of Recommendations on Education"

"4. Regulation

There is a clear need to establish an Independent Regulatory Authority for Higher Education (IRAHE). Such a regulatory authority is both necessary and desirable.

It is necessary for two important reasons. First, in India, it requires an Act of Legislature of Parliament to set up a University. The deemed university route is much too difficult for new institutions. Entry through legislation alone, as at present, is a formidable barrier. The consequence is a steady increase in the average size of existing universities with a steady deterioration in their quality. The absence of competition only compounds problems. Second, as we seek to expand the higher education system, entry norms will be needed for private institutions and public-private partnerships. The institutional framework for this purpose must be put in place here and now.

It is desirable for four important reasons. First, it would minimize conflicts of interest as it would create an arm's length distance from stakeholders. Second, it would replace the present system which is over-regulated but under-governed, through more appropriate forms of intervention. Third, it would rationalize the existing system where mandates are both confusing and overlapping. Fourth, it would dispense with the multiplicity or regulatory agencies to provide a single-window clearance.

The present regulatory system in higher education is flawed in many respects. The barriers to entry are too high. The system of authorizing entry is cumbersome and there are extensive rules after entry, as the UGC seeks to regulate almost every aspect of an institution from fees to curriculum... The other regulators, say in the sphere of professional education, are often inconsistent in their adherence to principles. There are several instances where an engineering college or a business school is approved, promptly, in a small house of a metropolitan suburb without the requisite teachers, infrastructure or facilities, but established universities experience difficulties in obtaining similar approvals. Such examples can be multiplied. These would only confirm that the complexity, the multiplicity and the rigidity of the existing regulatory structure is not conducive to the expansion of higher education opportunities in India.

In sum, the existing regulatory framework constraints the supply of good institutions, excessively regulates existing institutions in the wrong places, and is not conducive to innovation or creativity in higher education. The challenge is therefore to design a regulatory system that increases the supply of good institutions and fosters accountability in those institutions. An independent regulator has to be the cornerstone of such a system.

The proposed IRAHE will rationalize the principles on which entry is regulated. There are two aspects to this rationalization: what is to be regulated and what are the principles used for regulation.

In higher education, regulators perform five functions: (1) Entry: licence to grant degrees. (2) Accreditation: quality benchmarking. (3) Disbursement of public funds. (4) Access: fees or affirmative action. (5) Licence: to practice profession.

India is perhaps the only country in the world where regulation in four of the five function is carried out by one entity, that is, the UGC. The purpose of creating an IRAHE is to separate these functions. The proposed IRAHE shall be responsible for setting the criteria and deciding on entry. It would, in addition, license agencies to take care of accreditation. The role of the UGC will be limited to disbursing public funds, Issues of access will be governed by State legislation on reservation and other forms of affirmative action. And, professional association may, in some institutions, set requirements to determine eligibility for conducting a profession. **All other regulatory agencies such as the AICTE will need to be abolished while the MCI and the BCI will be limited to their role as professional associations.** These professional associations could conduct nationwide examinations to provide licence for those wishing to enter the profession.

The second aspect of regulation is the principle use to regulate. The IRAHE will determine eligibility for setting up a new institution based on transparent criteria rather than discretionary controls. Its main role would be to exercise due diligence at the point it approves a licence to grant degrees. In doing so, it would assess the academic credibility and the financial viability of the proposed institution on the basis of information submitted in accordance with the stipulated criteria. It will apply exactly the same norms to public and private institutions, just as it will apply the same norms to domestic and international institutions.

The IRAHE would have to be established by an Act of Parliament. It would be the only agency that would be authorized to accord degree granting power to higher education institutions. It would also be responsible for monitoring standards and settling disputes. It should also be thought of as the authority for licensing accreditation agencies. The IRAHE must be at an arm's-length from the government and independent of all stakeholders including the concerned Ministries of the Government. **The Acts of the UGC, AICTE, MCI and BCI would have to be amended.** The role of the UGC would be re-defined to focus on the disbursement of grants to, and maintenance of, public institutions in higher education. **The entry regulatory functions of the AICTE, the MCI and the BCI would be performed by the IRAHE, so that their role would be limited to that of professional associations.** These professional associations could conduct nationwide examinations to provide licences for those wishing to enter the profession."

(Emphasis added)

Computer education in schools

331. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has formulated a plan to teach computer education in 5,000 schools with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 400 crores;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of schools identified in Andhra Pradesh, district-wise;

(d) whether it is also a fact that Centre and States would have to share the expenditure in the ratio of 75:25;